

20 May 1981
Ops 2 - NC

NICOSIA_BUREAU

1. LOCAL STAFF: [] Nicosia is at TO. They are divided into the Arabic-language teams [] the Greek-language team [] the Persian-language team [] the Turkish sector translates Turkish press materials as well as Soviet Azeri and Uzbek recordings. []

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2. PRODUCTION: On the whole, Nicosia's production has declined dramatically in recent years, monthly publishable wordage having dropped from more than 500,000 words in 1983 to less than 300,000 this year. On the other hand, the assumption of several casts of Tehran Persian coverage from Gulf Bureau in 1986 has generated more than 30,000 words a month of copy throughout most of this year.

3. COVERAGE ISSUES

A. SATELLITE MONITORING: Based on current information, we anticipate Ku-band monitoring will enable the bureau to monitor Iranian television and radio and possibly Turkish television (no language capability in the bureau itself) off Intelsat. Potential C-band Middle East coverage includes -- on Arabsat -- Saudi, Bahraini and Omani TV and possible video feeds from the Arabsat distribution center in Tunis -- and on Intelsat -- Sudanese radio and TV, Libyan and Algerian TV and a variety of radio and press agency services including SPA. With the exception of potentially improved coverage of Sudan, currently available C-band coverage will not substantially affect FBIS Middle East coverage although Nicosia's range of crisis coverage will improve. Nicosia's capability to cover sources now covered by BBC, e.g., Tehran radio, Libyan TV, Saudi TV and potentially SPA, may warrant a realignment of coverage some time in the future. However, Nicosia's operational flexibility will be severely restricted by having only one C-band dish.

B. TEHRAN TV TAPES: Assuming Nicosia is to take over this Tel Aviv project, the bureau should look into courier delivery schedules and costs for service to both London and Reston. The current delivery to Reston via Internet ranges from 1 to 5 days. (Average delivery time will improve once Reston is linked to Internet.) With the bureau in a position to preview the tapes, it may be preferable to switch to sending only select rather than daily tapes.

C. SATELLITE CRUISING: The equipment configuration of Nicosia's only C-band dish will limit its cruising capability. Appropriate cruising priorities would be to establish the effective lookangle, to establish the reliability of Sudanese transmissions, to sample the major newcasts of available Middle East television, and to provide more extensive sampling of the press agency feeds than BBC has done. Regardless of the limited cruising capability of the Nicosia dish, an experienced satellite cruiser ought to TDY to the bureau once the dish is installed to provide guidance on tuning and on reporting observations.

D. CAIRO TELEVISION: At the request of Amembassy Cairo, both Nicosia and Tel Aviv bureaus extensively sampled Cairo TV programming and established arrangements to assume limited coverage. Cairo TV has not proven to be a major source requiring regular coverage.

E. FACSIMILE: Recommend that Nicosia and the other Middle East bureaus consider whether installation of a facsimile machine would be worthwhile for sending and receiving press materials. Nicosia could improve its access to Arabic press materials from other bureaus and from embassies and, if necessary, could send Turkish materials to Tel Aviv for processing assuming Nicosia was able to scan the Turkish press.